IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: T. ARAKI, et al

Serial No.: Not yet assigned

Filed: January 10, 2002

For: ITEM ALLOCATION METHOD, SYSTEM AND PROGRAM FOR
WORKFLOW SYSTEM

Group: Not yet assigned

Examiner: Not yet assigned

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents   January 10, 2002
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

The following amendments and remarks are respectfully submitted prior to the Rule

53(b) Continuation Application filed on even date.

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please insert before the first line of the specification the following:

--   This is a continuation of application Serial No. 09/981,756, filed October 19, 2001. --

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-12 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter

thereof.

Please add new claims 13-25 as follows:

--   13.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system that processes items in computers in accordance with a previously defined business process, said server computer being connected to a plurality of other computers and a database for storing items, said server computer comprising:

an item extraction condition table corresponding to said business process; and

an item allocation processing section for receiving an item acquisition request containing a business process identifier from a computer included in said other computers, extracting items satisfying a previously determined condition from said item extraction condition table based on said received item acquisition request, selecting one item from among said extracted items by using an item selection key, and transmitting said selected item to said computer included in said other computers that transmitted said item acquisition request.

14.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system that processes items in accordance with an order of a previously defined business process, said server computer being connected to a plurality of client computers and a database for storing items, and said server computer comprising:

an item allocation processing section for extracting a plurality of items from said database so as to at least allocate identical items to two or more client computers included in said client computers based on item acquisition requests received from said client computers, and extracting one item for each of said client computers from among said extracted items by using an item selection key; and

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a transmission section for transmitting said extracted item to each of said client computers that requested item acquisition.

15.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system according to claim 13, wherein said item selection key is an identifier added to said item acquisition request, time when said request has been received, or an identifier depending upon a worker who has transmitted said item acquisition request.

16.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system according to claim 14, wherein said item selection key is an identifier added to said item acquisition request, time when said request has been received, or an identifier depending upon a worker who has transmitted said item acquisition request.

17.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system according to claim 13, wherein said item selection key is a value depending upon a client program that operates in each of said other computers.

18.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system according to claim 14, wherein said item selection key is a value depending upon a client program that operates in each of said client computers.

19.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system according to claim 17, wherein said value depending upon a client program that operates in

each of said other computers is a thread ID of the client program, a process ID of the client program, an object reference acquired from the client program, or an identifier of a connection formed from the client program to the server at time of said item request.

20.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system according to claim 18, wherein said value depending upon a client program that operates in each of said client computers is a thread ID of the client program, a process ID of the client program, an object reference acquired from the client program, or an identifier of a connection formed from the client program to the server at time of said item request.

21.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system according to claim 13, wherein said item selection key is either an IP address or a MAC address of each of said other computers.

22.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system according to claim 14, wherein said item selection key is either an IP address or a MAC address of each of said client computers.

23.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system according to claim 13, wherein said item allocation processing section operates for each of works of a business process stored in the server.

24.   A server computer that conducts item allocation in a workflow system according to claim 14, wherein said item allocation processing section operates for each of works of a business process stored in the server.

25.   A workflow system including a server computer and a plurality of client computers, said server computer being connected to said plurality of client computers and a database for storing items,

said server computer extracting a workflow control program, said workflow control program when executed causing server to perform:

receiving item acquisition conditions and item acquisition requests from said client computers;

extracting items from among items stored in said database, based on said received item acquisition conditions; and

transmitting said extracted items to said client computers,

wherein each of said client computers executing a workflow client program for causing said client computer to perform selecting items to be processed in the client computer from among items received from said server computer by using an item selection key. --
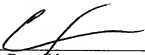
REMARKS

Entry of the above amendments prior to examination is respectfully requested.

Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (500.40786CX1).

Respectfully submitted,

ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP

Carl I. Brundidge
Registration No. 29,621

CIB/jdc
(703) 312-6600